

Message Text

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54

ACTION NEA-13

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 DPW-01 IO-14 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03

SS-20 USIA-15 SAM-01 DRC-01 /108 W

----- 087700

R 190934Z FEB 74

FM USINT CAIRO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5378

INFO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMCONSUL JERSUALEM

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

C O N F I D E N T I A L CAIRO 786

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR IS EG

SUBJECT: REPATRIATION 15 EGYPTIAN POW'S AND

TWO ISRAELI CIVILIANS

REF: TEL AVIV 926

1. WE HAVE SEEN NO MENTION IN EGYPTIAN MEDIA OF RETURN TWO ISRAELI CIVILIANS AND BUS, OR RETURN 15 EGYPTIAN POW'S FEB 14 AS REPORTED REFTEL. INSTEAD, THERE IS CONSIDERABLE COVERAGE OF ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL AS WELL AS SPATE OF ARTICLES DEMANDING WAR REPARATIONS FROM ISRAEL AND HER FRIENDS.

2. GOE WILL, WE BELIEVE, FIND PROMINENT ISRAELI PRESS PLAY OF THESE TWO INCIDENTS EMBARRASSING. SADAT, FOR POLICY REASONS, CONTINUES TO DOWNPLAY ANY ISRAELI-EGYPTIAN CONTACTS WHICH COULD BE INTERPRETED AS GRATUITOUS GESTURES OF MUTUAL GOOD WILL. ALTHOUGH THOSE IN THE KNOW HERE ARE FULLY COGNIZANT OF VALUE OF DEMONSTRATING EGYPTIAN GOOD FAITH TO GOI AND VICE VERSA, SADAT REMAINS ACUTELY AWARE OF HIS VULNERABILITY VIS-A-VIS THOSE EGYPTIANS WHO VIEW DISENGAGEMENT AS STRATEGIC GIVEAWAY. EVEN MORE SO, HE IS CONCERNED NOT TO PROVIDE HOSTILE ARAB ELEMENTS OUTSIDE
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EGYPT, ESPECIALLY SYRIA, WITH AMMUNITION FOR CRITICISM.

3. CONFIDENCE BUILDING IS CLEARLY NEEDED. REGRETTABLY,
UNLIKE ISRAELIS, EGYPTIANS ARE NOT YET READY ACKNOWLEDGE
PUBLICLY THAT THEY AND ISRAELIS CAN, IF THEY WILL, ACT
HUMANLY TOWARD EACH OTHER. HOPEFULLY THIS WILL STILL COME.
EILTS

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NNN

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